# Data Quality Update

## SUMMARY

1.1 The Council has a duty to maintain adequate data quality standards to ensure performance reporting at all levels is accurate and robust. Our arrangements are subject to an annual review by our external auditors, which in 2007/08 were assessed as 'performing well'.

1.2 In April 2008, Audit and Accounts Committee approved a Data Quality Policy which sets out roles, responsibilities and standards for data collation, use and reporting. An action plan was created to improve data quality arrangements.

1.3 In 2008/09 the Council has introduced an innovative self assessment process to facilitate risk based reviews of performance indicators. It is planned to extend this across the wider National Indicator set.

1.4 There are some areas of slippage. Further work will be undertaken to embed data quality within departmental risk registers and raise the profile of data quality across the Partnership.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 To note progress in achieving the data quality action plan.

| SUPPORTING INFORMATION |
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**Review of data quality 2007/08**

3.1 The Council's data quality arrangements are assessed annually by the External Auditors as part of the Use of Resources judgement. This consists of a three stage review process as follows…

- Management arrangements.

- Analytical review.

- Data quality spot checks.

3.2 The Annual Audit and Inspection Letter for 2007/08 confirms that data quality arrangements are continuing to perform well. In particular, the Council's arrangements for data use have been assessed as performing strongly.

3.3 Spot checks were undertaken on six indicators – benefits processing (BV78a and b), Pedestrian crossings for disabled people (BV165), local street and environmental cleanliness (BV199a, b and c). All indicators were found to be stated fairly.

**Data quality action plan**

3.4 Last year's review of data quality arrangements identified a number of areas for improvement. Progress in delivering the action plan is shown in **Appendix 2**.

3.5 Achievements to date are as follows:

- Derby City Partnership approved the data quality policy in November 2008 as part of an integrated approach to information management and research. The Partnership Performance Group takes responsibility for monitoring the policy and action plan.

- Over the past 12 months, Internal Audit have undertaken reviews of 12 performance indicators, focusing in particular on the target areas included within the second Local Public Service Agreement, as these required validation to support our reward claim.

- An electronic self assessment process has been introduced to target internal audit reviews and spot checks of indicators in accordance with risk. Internal Audit has evaluated the results of the self assessments for all LAA indicators to identify those where it is considered that the measurement controls may be weak and may benefit from an Audit review. It is intended to focus monitoring activities on the controls which are most likely to be weak, as identified from the self assessment template. 12 indicators have been selected for detailed review, including a number of partner indicators.

3.6 There are some areas of slippage as highlighted in the action plan. Further work is required to:

- raise the profile of data quality across the Partnership, including training for Board members.

- embed data quality into departmental risk registers.

- undertake detailed reviews of those LAA indicators identified as high risk and extend the self assessment process for all National Indicators.

3.7 Over the next month, the action plan will be updated to reflect the new Use of Resources key lines of enquiry and will incorporate these areas that require carrying forward.

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| **For more information contact:** | Heather Greenan Tel 01332 256297   heather.greenan@derby.gov.uk |
| **Background papers:** | |
| **List of appendices:** | Appendix 1 – Implications |
| | Appendix 2 – Data Quality Action Plan |

**IMPLICATIONS**

**Financial**

1.      The results of the data quality audit contribute towards the assessment of Use of Resources.

**Legal**

2.      None directly arising from this report.

**Personnel**

3.      None directly arising from this report.

**Equalities impact**

4.      None directly arising from this report.

**Corporate priorities**

5.      Our data quality arrangements support the analysis and performance reporting on progress in delivering the Council's corporate priorities.

## Data Quality Action Plan – March 2009

| Ref | Action | Outcomes | Lead unit/ officer(s) | Timescale | Progress Rating | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Governance and leadership** | | | | | | |
| 1.1 | Undertake training for Board and elected members on the importance of data quality and the arrangements put in place to mitigate the risks associated with poor data quality. | Evidence that those charged with governance have received training on the importance of data quality and are aware of the arrangements. | Planning & Performance Team. | September 2008 | Some slippage. | Elected member training took place on 24 June. Training format for Partnership Board members still to be confirmed. |
| 1.2 | Data quality to be included as a standing agenda item on all DCP Performance Group meetings. | There is a framework for monitoring data quality, with regular formal reporting on key measures. | Local Agreements Coordinator. | March 2008 | Completed. | |
| 1.3 | Make sure data quality is reflected in all business plans. | Data quality objectives are linked to business objectives and are supported by local delivery plans. | Performance Leads. Planning Performance Officer. | April 2008 | Completed. | Data quality is a corporate and policy theme in the business planning guidance and as such departments include details on their plans to address data quality. |
| 1.4 | Review all departmental risk registers to ensure data quality is incorporated. | Data quality is embedded in risk management arrangements, with regular assessment of risks associated with unreliable or inaccurate data. | Performance Leads. Council Strategic Risk Group. | June 2008 | Major slippage | Departmental risk registers are still to be updated. Data quality will be incorporated for 2009/10. |
| 1.5 | Publish data quality policy and action plan across the Partnership. | Corporate commitment to data quality is actively promoted and making roles and responsibilities clear. | DCP Performance Group | May 2008 | Completed. | The policy was approved by Management Group on 27 November. Also published on DCP and Council websites. |

| Ref | Action | Outcomes | Lead unit/ officer(s) | Timescale | Progress Rating | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **2. Policies** | | | | | | |
| 2.1 | Draw up communications process to inform staff of changes in data quality procedures. | Consistency in reporting compliance with data quality policies. | DCP Performance Group | September 2008 | Completed | Data quality strategy has been updated. |
| 2.2 | Establish data sharing protocols for all partners providing data for Data Warehouse and Performance Eye. | A formal set of quality requirements is applied to all third party data used by the organisation. | Research and Strategy Officer. | July 2008 | Some slippage. | Protocols are in place for the Data Warehouse. The protocol for Performance Eye will be considered as part of the system tender process. |
| 2.3 | Review roles and responsibilities of performance coordinators to ensure there is a data quality champion in place for each partner or department. | Effective network of data quality champions across the Partnership. | DCP Performance Group | July 2008. | Completed | Members of the Performance Group are nominated as data quality champions for their organisation / dept. The membership of the group has just been reviewed to make sure representation covers the partnership. |
| **3. Systems and processes** | | | | | | |
| 3.1 | Implement the revised self assessment template for new National Indicators. | Completed self assessments for all national indicators. | Performance Leads/ DQ Champions.  Compiling/ Accountable Officers | October 2008 | Completed. | All Self assessment forms issued. Templates have been submitted for all LAA indicators. |
| 3.2 | Based on completed self assessments, identify high risk indicators for incorporation into the Internal Audit programme for 2008/09. | Audit reviews of high risk indicators, with recommendations for improvement. | Planning & Performance Team / Internal Audit. | November 2008 | Some slippage | Self assessment process has been completed but indicator reviews will be carried out in the summer. |
| 3.3 | Introduce a system of control mapping and testing of performance information systems. | Prevention and detection of data manipulation and error. | Internal Audit. | March 2009 | On track | Controls are considered as part of detailed PI reviews. |

| Ref | Action | Outcomes | Lead unit/ officer(s) | Timescale | Progress Rating | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3.4 | Introduce a system of departmental / partner spot checks. | Ongoing challenge of data quality arrangements. | Performance Leads/ DQ Champions. | October 2008 | On track | Spot checks for Council indicators have been ongoing as part of quarterly performance reporting. Validation will be carried out as part of year-end procedures, with particular emphasis on LAA indicators. Going forward, spot checks need to be targeted based on results of self assessment process. |
| **4. People and skills** | | | | | | |
| 4.1 | Awareness sessions to be held in all departments to be delivered to all staff involved in the performance process. | Staff are aware of roles and responsibilities in relation to data quality. | Performance Leads/ DQ Champions. | March 2009 | On track | Data quality is covered as part of Performance Eye training, which is undertaken regularly. |
| 4.2 | Check job descriptions of appropriate staff and amend as necessary. | Accountability for data quality is part of IPM for those defined as responsible for data quality | Planning & Performance Team / HR | July 2008 | Some slippage | This is being done on an ad-hoc basis. Job descriptions are being revised as and when vacancies arise. A policy is being prepared to incorporate data quality into HR recruitment procedures. |
| **5. Data use and reporting** | | | | | | |
| 5.1 | Work to reduce missing/incomplete data. | Strengthened processes for checking reported data/performance indicators, both departmentally and corporately. | Performance Leads/ DQ Champions. Assistant Directors. | Ongoing. | On track | Q2 and Q3 saw an improvement in levels of missing data. |

| Ref | Action | Outcomes | Lead unit/ officer(s) | Timescale | Progress Rating | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5.2 | Work with accountable officers to improve the standard of commentary and action planning. | Improved standard of contextual information to support outturn performance results. | Performance Leads/ DQ Champions. Accountable Officers. | Ongoing. | On track | There is still room for improvement on commentary/ action planning and further work is required as part of the new performance framework. To be incorporated into data quality awareness toolkit. |